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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-first year

Identical letters dated 7 February 2006 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Since my last letter to you on 18 January 2006, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, has witnessed significant political developments, namely the conclusion of democratic and transparent elections. Conversely, these positive developments in Palestine's efforts to cement democracy as a way of life and despite the obstruction of occupation, Israel, the occupying Power, has wasted no time in escalating the situation on the ground by intensifying its military incursions into Palestinian towns and resuming, with marked intensity, its unlawful campaign of extrajudicial executions of Palestinians.

In the past week, Israeli occupying forces have carried out six separate extrajudicial attacks, resulting in the execution of twelve Palestinians and the injury of several others. In fact, Israeli occupying forces committed three of the extrajudicial executions in less than an eight-hour period. The most recent of these extrajudicial executions occurred today, 7 February 2006, while the present letter was being drafted. In this connection, two Palestinians were killed when Israeli occupying forces fired two missiles from a helicopter gunship targeting a car in Gaza City. Moreover, Israeli occupying forces continued with its raid and artillery bombardment in northern Gaza, bombing a bridge and six roads. One shell hit a home, critically injuring a 15-year-old girl. In another incident in the West Bank town of Nablus, Ahmed Radad was killed instantly by Israeli occupying forces during an early morning raid.

Yesterday, 6 February 2006, Israeli helicopters fired at least three missiles at a car driving through a residential area near Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip. The missile attack killed Rami Hannouneh and Hasan Asfour in addition to injuring several innocent bystanders who happened to be driving or walking past the scene of the attack.

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Furthermore, during the early morning hours of 5 February 2006, two Palestinians were killed in yet another extrajudicial execution attack when missiles struck their car as they were driving in Gaza City's Al-Zaitoun neighbourhood. Four bystanders were also injured in the attack, one of them seriously. Hours prior to this attack, late on 4 February 2006, Israeli helicopters fired several missiles at Al-Shams sports club in southern Gaza City, then chased the injured as they were being rescued and driven to the hospital with at least two additional missiles. The missile attack killed 18-year-old Naser Marshoud, Hani Al-Qayed and Yassin Barghouth, as well as injuring five others, one seriously.

On 31 January 2006, Israeli occupying forces shot dead Nidal Abu Sa'da and Ahmad Al-Tubasi in the village of Arraba, near Jenin in the northern West Bank. The occupying forces also injured four civilians in the attack.

These attacks have been incessant, as the chronology clearly demonstrates. More dangerously, these unlawful attacks, which amount to war crimes and indicate an abject disdain for the worth of Palestinian lives, threaten to ignite an already extremely tense situation on the ground. Additionally, this deadly campaign against Palestinians jeopardizes all efforts exerted at the present time to extend the period of calm and work on transferring powers to the new Palestinian Government in a smooth and efficient manner. These deadly attacks exert an additional and unbearable amount of pressure on the Palestinian people and leadership and threaten to spin the situation out of control, drowning both sides in a renewed cycle of violence and suffering that could and should be averted.

In addition to the intensified extrajudicial execution campaign, Israel, the occupying Power, has also carried out at least 81 military incursions into Palestinian cities and villages and continues to arrest scores of Palestinians. These military incursions spread death, destruction, anger, and sorrow in the midst of Palestinian families, and they are part of a systematic policy adopted by the occupying Power to choke life, hope, and stability out of the lives of Palestinian families across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The story of 9-year-old Aya Al-Astal who was shot dead near the Kisufim crossing in the Gaza Strip on 26 January 2006, after having gotten lost while returning home from school, clearly demonstrates the deadly effects of this violent policy.

The continuation of aggression committed by the Israeli occupying forces against the Palestinian people, including the continuation of its illegal policy of extrajudicial executions, should be condemned by the international community. Israel, the occupying Power, will continue to deliberately commit its heinous crimes only as long as it continues to believe it can act against the Palestinian people under its occupation with impunity. In this regard, we urge the international community to take the necessary measures to compel Israel to cease forthwith its flagrant violations of international law and international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 230 letters to you regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. Those letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 19 January 2006 (A/ES-10/316-S/2006/30) constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel,

the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

Accordingly, in follow-up to the above-mentioned letters, it is my profound regret to inform you that, since our last letter to you, at least ten more Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli occupying forces, raising the total number of martyrs killed since September 2000 to 3,774. (The names of the martyrs that have been identified are listed in the annex to the present letter.)

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations

Annex to the identical letters dated 7 February 2006 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

Names of martyrs killed by the Israeli occupying forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem* (Wednesday, 25 January to Tuesday, 7 February 2006)

Thursday, 26 January 2006

1. Aya Mohamed Al-Astal (9 years old)

Tuesday, 31 January 2006

1. Nidal Abu Sa'da
2. Ahmed Al-Tubasi

Sunday, 5 February 2006

1. Naser Ramadan Marshoud (18 years old)
2. Hani Taha Al-Qayed
3. Yassin Barghouth
4. Jihad Al-Sawafri
5. Adnan Boustane Abu Jandale

Monday, 6 February 2006

1. Hassan Ossfour
2. Ramy Hannouneh

Tuesday, 7 February 2006

1. Ahmed Radad
2. Mohammed Abu Shareya
3. Suhale Baqer

* The total number of Palestinian martyrs killed by the Israeli occupying forces since 28 September 2000 is 3,744.